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An Aquatic Caecilian from the Magdalena River, Colombia, S.A.

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Dr. Edwin Cooper, of the University of California Medical School, recently sent me a caecilian which he had used in certain experimental work. It appears to belong to the recently described genus *Nectocaecilia* Taylor, a genus comprising four previously known species that are widely distributed in South America. As yet only an exceedingly small number of individuals of this genus have been taken. It is presumed that this species is aquatic, as are the species of the related genera of the family Typhlonectidae.

Nectocaecilia cooperi, sp. nov.
(Figs. 1-2)

HOLOTYPE. American Museum of Natural History, No. A82255. From the Río Magdalena at Barranquilla, Colombia, South America.

DIAGNOSIS. Having the generic characters. An elongate slender typhlonectid caecilian lacking a dorsal "fin." Approximately 86 primary folds, some rather dim, seemingly none complete; 96 vertebrae; eyes visible, in socket. Width of body in length approximately 45 times. Dentition in four series. Internal nares very large. Deep black throughout except for light coloration about eyes and at vent, and slightly lighter coloration on the head and jaws.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HOLOTYPE. Head a little wider than body; total length 356 mm. Eye visible, in a socket; tentacular opening very small, close behind the much enlarged nostril, the distance from eye, 4 mm, from nostril 0.45 (the tip of the snout has been injured the skin missing, so that the deeply sculptured bones are exposed). Snout tip to first nuchal groove, 12 mm (lateral measurement), to third nuchal groove, 22 mm. The two nuchal collars are indistinct. Following the collars there are approximately 86 primary folds (some dim and difficult to count), the body with a large unsegmented "shield" at termination. The last centimeter of body strongly triangular in cross section, flattened on the ventral side. The disc of the anal region whitish,

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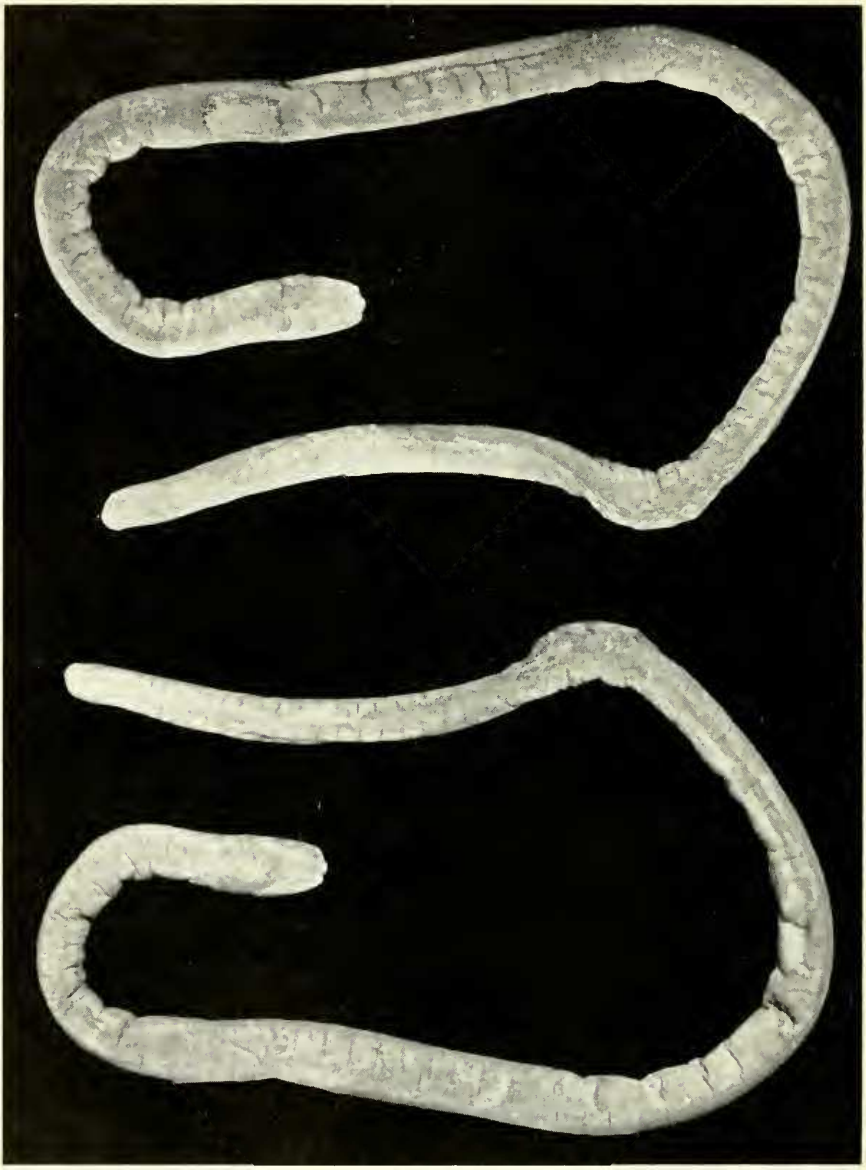

FIG. 1. *Nectocaecilia cooperi* sp. nov. Holotype, AMNH No. A82255. From Río Magdalena, Barranquilla, Colombia, S.A. Dorsal (upper) and ventral (lower) views. Actual length, 356 mm.

somewhat oval, the grooves between the surrounding denticulations terminating at vent, do not reach to edge of disc. There are 5 denticulations posterior to the vent, two lateral to it, each of which bears a small black anal gland, and two larger ones preceding the vent. A vague suggestion of a dorsal ridge but no dorsal "fin." Choanae very large relatively, the length 3 mm, the width approximately 1.5 mm. The distance between choanae, 1.1 mm. No scales or secondary folds. The general surface relatively free from the wrinkles usually present in the typhlonectids.

Dentition. Premaxillary-maxillary series, 18-1-18; prevomeropalatine, 18-1-18; dentary 16-17; splenial series, 3-(1?). The counts, if not exact are very close approximations. The palatine and splenial teeth are the smallest, the anterior dentaries largest.

Measurements in mm. Total length, 356; head width, 9; body width about 8; width preceding vent, 4.4; body height, 8; snout projects 3.

Remarks. A figure of the type specimen is presented. The spine in the posterior part of the body has been broken and healed before capture. An X-ray shows the presence of 96 vertebrae.

The species is presumably related to *Nectocaecilia haydee* (Roze), a species which differs in having a "fin" from head to terminus. The number of splenial teeth is different.

The type is most probably a young specimen. It has been named for Dr. Edwin Cooper who has made the specimen available to me for study.

FIG. 2. *Nectocaecilia cooperi* Holotype. From Río Magdalena at Barranquilla, Colombia, S.A. X-ray showing 96 vertebrae.